

Duns Community Nursery Day Care of Children

53 Newtown Street
Duns
TD11 3AU

Telephone: 07854920612

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 January 2025

Service provided by:
Duns Community Childcare CIC

Service provider number:
SP2023000064

Service no:
CS2023000089

About the service

Duns Community Nursery is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a care service to a maximum of 35 children not yet attending primary school. Further conditions of the service include no more than 13 are aged under 2 years; and no more than 22 are aged 2 years to those not yet attending primary school full time. The service is situated in the rural town of Duns within the Scottish Borders.

The premises provides playrooms over two floors, toilets, and nappy changing areas, kitchen and a staff room. The building is surrounded by an enclosed outdoor play area.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced follow up inspection which took place on 09 and 13 January 2025. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

This follow-up inspection focused on the requirements and areas for improvement made during the previous inspection completed on 03 June 2024. We evaluated how the service had addressed these to improve outcomes for children.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, information submitted by the service as part of their action plan and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with the manager of the service
- spoke with staff
- observed practice
- reviewed documents which included the service action plan
- spoke with representatives from Scottish Borders Council

Key messages

- We issued a letter of serious concern on 13 January 2025 after we identified significant gaps around medication and staff's understanding around guidelines, policies and procedures. Satisfactory improvements were made during the inspection visits; however, the team should now work to ensure improvements are sustained overtime.
- Children were happy and having fun.
- Children had more opportunities to engage in activities which promoted their developmental stages, interests and curiosities.
- Quality assurance and auditing processes should be further developed to support the improvement of the service.
- Overall, effective staff deployment supported positive outcomes for children.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How good is our care, play and learning?	2 - Weak
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	2 - Weak
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How good is our care, play and learning?

2 - Weak

During this follow-up inspection, we evaluated different parts of this key question as weak and good, with an overall grade of weak. Whilst we identified some strengths, these were compromised by significant weaknesses. As these weaknesses concerned the welfare and safety of children during part of this inspection, we made a requirement for improvement.

Quality Indicator 1.1: Nurturing care and support

Progress had been made to children's personal planning which improved outcomes for some children. Further work was needed to ensure the needs of all children were consistently planned for, monitored and strategies evaluated. This would ensure all children were supported to reach their full potential (see area for improvement 1).

Children's health and safety was significantly compromised by insufficient record-keeping of children's medical conditions and medicines along with insufficient staff knowledge of children's medical conditions. This required immediate action. We issued a letter of serious concern to the service on 13 January 2025 outlining what immediate improvements were required. We returned to the service, on 15 January 2025, and found systems around record keeping and procedures for administering medication had improved. Staff had been supported by management to understand children's health and medication needs, and to know the signs when a child requires medication. This supported staff to know how to respond quickly and safely when a child required medication.

We comment on improvements in more detail in the section of this report headed: 'What the service has done to meet any requirements made at or since the last inspection' and 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection'.

Quality Indicator 1.3: Play and learning

During this follow-up inspection, we acknowledged the service's progress and regraded the evaluation for this quality indicator from adequate to good.

There had been improvements made to the quality of planning for play across the setting. Staff had also improved how children's progress in their learning was recorded. As a result, children were happy, having fun and beginning to progress in their learning.

We comment on improvements in more detail in the section of this report headed: 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement made at or since the last inspection'

Areas for improvement

1. To support children's health, welfare and safety needs, recorded strategies should be monitored and the impact evaluated. This would ensure staff have access to up to date information to support children to reach their full potential.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices'. (HSCS 1.15)

How good is our setting?

3 - Adequate

During this follow-up inspection, we evaluated this key question as adequate. Although some improvements had been made to the service provided, there are still issues to be addressed. Therefore, the evaluation of adequate will remain.

Quality indicator 2.2 - Children experience high quality facilities.

Improvements had been made to the play environment that supported children's interests, development and learning. Staff had worked hard to evaluate the spaces to ensure resources sparked children's interests and stages of development. We have asked that the staff continue to build on these opportunities to ensure children are engaged in purposeful play, learning and having fun.

At the previous inspection we asked the provider to ensure the condition on their registration certificate was met, this was around creating direct access from the playroom into the garden. Moving forward, the provider should continue to progress with this outstanding area for improvement and ensure a plan of action is submitted to the Care Inspectorate in a timely fashion (see area for improvement 1).

We comment on improvements in more detail in the section of this report headed: 'What the service has done to meet any area's for improvement made at or since the last inspection'

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure children experience an environment that is respectfully maintained and inviting, the providers should continue with their planned refurbishment of the building. This should include the planned fitting of a door from the playroom, this would ensure the condition stated on the registration certificate is met.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.22)

How good is our leadership?

2 - Weak

During this follow-up inspection, we evaluated this key question as weak. Although some improvements had been made to the service provided, there are still issues to be addressed. Therefore, the evaluation of weak will remain.

Quality Indicator 3.1: Quality assurance and improvement are led well

At our last inspection we made a requirement relating to quality assurance, effective auditing, monitoring and self evaluation. The manager and staff team had worked hard to bring about positive change and improve outcomes for children. The service had worked in partnership with Scottish Borders Council to implement new quality assurance systems. These were still in their infancy; however, they had started to influence improvements across key areas of practice. For example, improvements in children's play spaces, planning for children's play and staff deployment. While progress had been made, further development of

medication administration practices and personal planning was needed. Therefore, auditing systems should continue to be refined to support ongoing improvement and identify any remaining gaps (see requirement 1).

At our last inspection we made a requirement relating to staffing. This included reviewing staff roles, responsibilities and conduct within the setting and developing a system for staff appraisals, that supported staff with their professional development. Meetings had been held with staff and they were keen to develop their professional knowledge and understanding. This had led to some improvements within children's planning and developing play spaces. Further development of the appraisal system and reflective practice discussions are still required (see requirement 2).

We comment in more detail in the sections of this report headed: 'What the service has done to meet any requirements made at or since the last inspection'.

Requirements

1. By 30 June 2025, the provider must ensure children receive a high quality of care and support where there is continuous improvement.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure that:

- a) the manager develops their professional understanding of self-evaluation and quality assurance;
- b) a system for self-evaluation is developed which results in an improvement plan;
- c) implement procedures for consistently auditing and monitoring the service;

This is to comply with regulation 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

2. By 16 June 2025, the provider must ensure children receive care and support from staff who are supported to fulfil their professional role and understand their responsibilities to meet the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Codes of Conduct.

To achieve this the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) review with staff their individual roles, responsibilities and conduct within the setting;
- b) develop and implement a system for staff appraisal and reflective practice discussion, which influences on-going professional development;
- c) ensure staff receive appropriate training for the work they are to perform, this should include supporting children with additional support needs.

This is in order to comply with The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 (HCSSA). Section 7. (1)(b) - Ensuring the wellbeing of staff.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, and able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisation codes'.

How good is our staff team?**3 - Adequate**

During this follow-up inspection, we recognised the progress made and revised the evaluation for this quality indicator from weak to adequate.

Quality indicator 4.3: Staff deployment.

There had been improvements made to the deployment of staff to ensure they could provide good quality outcomes for children. This was achieved through the development of consistent staff teams and staffing contingency planning.

Policies and procedures had been reviewed and shared with staff and improvements had been made to the safer recruitment procedures. However, in some cases the procedures had not been followed appropriately, especially around recording of medication and chronologies within children's individual plans. This area for improvement will remain in place to support the service's continued focus on enhancing these aspects of practice, ensuring children's safety and sustaining improvements (area for improvement 1).

We comment on improvements in more detail in the section of this report headed: 'What the service has done to meet any requirements made at or since the last inspection' and 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection'.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure the safety and welfare of the children, policies and procedures should be followed. This should include but not limited too the safer recruitment of staff and safe administration of medication.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited ' (HSCS 4.24).

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection**Requirements****Requirement 1**

By Wednesday 15 January 2025, you must ensure all children are kept safe from harm by ensuring their medication and health needs are fully understood, considered and planned for.

To do this, you must, at a minimum ensure:

- Where a child requires medication for their health, their personal plan must include detailed information regarding the medication, including administration instructions, dosage, expiry dates and any necessary

support or care strategies should be recorded.

- Ensure all staff are supported to know the signs when a child requires medication.
- Ensure all staff understand children's health and medication needs and know how to respond quickly and safely when a child required medication.

This is to comply with regulation 4 (1) (a) and regulation 5 of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210)

This requirement was made on 13 January 2025.

Action taken on previous requirement

This requirement was made during the inspection and we sent a letter of serious concern to the service. We returned to the service to check compliance and found the requirement had been met.

The service had improved their management, storage and administration of medication. Staff were being supported by management to understand children's health and medication needs, and to know the signs when a child requires medication. This supported staff to know how to respond quickly and safely when a child required medication. This contributed to children's overall safety, care and wellbeing.

This requirement was made on the 13 January 2025 and compliance checked on 15 January 2025. This requirement has been met.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 2

By 30 September 2024, the provider must ensure children receive a high quality of care and support where there is continuous improvement.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum ensure that:

- a) the manager develops their professional understanding of self-evaluation and quality assurance;
- b) a system for self-evaluation is developed which results in an improvement plan;
- c) implement procedures for consistently auditing and monitoring the service;

This is to comply with regulation 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

This requirement was made on 3 June 2024.

Action taken on previous requirement

The follow up inspection evidenced that some improvements had been made to ensure children receive a high quality of care and support where there is continuous improvement.

- a) The manager had worked in partnership with Scottish Borders Council and had begun to implement a new quality assurance system. Whilst this was still in its infancy, it had begun to influence some positive changes and improvements across the service.
- b) A quality assurance calendar that identified areas to be monitored and assessed was now in place. However, these were at the early stages of development and were not fully enabling continuous improvement. Gaps remained in key aspects of children's care, play and learning, which were impacting on their ability to reach their full potential. Management understood the need to quality assure informally and formally to support staff practice and to ensure children receive a quality service.
- c) Further development of the auditing and monitoring process is required to keep children safe. This should include observing staff practice, developing their professional knowledge and understanding around child protection and medication, along with reviewing policies and procedures. The service now require time to embed these systems in place to support positive outcomes for all.

This requirement remains in place with an extended timescale of 16 June 2025.

Not met

Requirement 3

By 02 September 2024, the provider must ensure children receive care and support from staff who are supported to fulfil their professional role and understand their responsibilities to meet the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Codes of Conduct.

To achieve this the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) review with staff their individual roles, responsibilities and conduct within the setting;
- b) develop and implement a system for staff appraisal and reflective practice discussion, which influences on-going professional development;
- c) ensure staff receive appropriate training for the work they are to perform, this should include supporting children with additional support needs.

This is in order to comply with The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 (HCSSA). Section 7. (1)(b) - Ensuring the wellbeing of staff.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, and able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisation codes'.

This requirement was made on 3 June 2024.

Action taken on previous requirement

The follow up inspection evidenced that some improvements had been made to ensure children receive care and support from staff who are supported to fulfil their professional role and understand their responsibilities to meet the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Codes of Conduct.

- a) Staff had discussed their individual roles, responsibilities and conduct at a team meeting and through a meeting held with the provider.

b) The ethos within the nursery was positive and staff told us they were happier and felt more supported. A system had been developed for staff appraisal, however, this did not identify staff's strengths, training needs or areas for development. The manager should continue to develop the support system for staff to ensure they have opportunities to discuss their wellbeing or any professional development that align with their roles and responsibilities.

c) Staff have undertaken professional development since the last inspection and some improvements made to outcomes for children. Further work is required to develop staff's understanding around the expectations of individual registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Staff should understand the expectation around continuous professional development and measure the impact this has on their practice.

This requirement remains in place with an extended timescale of 16 June 2025.

Not met

Requirement 4

By 26 August 2024, the provider must ensure that there are, at all times, staff present in suitable numbers and with the skill to meet the care, welfare, support and safety needs of children.

To achieve this the provider must, at a minimum:

- a) provide consistency of staffing in such numbers to meet the care routines and support needs of all children;
- b) ensure the deployment of staff promotes transitions across the day which would support children's sense of security and allow for appropriate supervision.

This is in order to comply with The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 (HCSSA). Section 7. (1)(a)(b)(c) - Duty on care service to ensure appropriate staffing and Section 8. (a)(b) - Training of staff.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HCSC) which state that: 'I am supported and cared for by people I know so that I experience consistency and continuity' (HCSC 4.16).

This requirement was made on 3 June 2024.

Action taken on previous requirement

The follow up inspection evidenced that significant improvements had been made to staff deployment to meet the care and support needs of children.

- a) The provider and manager had established consistent staff teams working across both playrooms in the setting. Additional staff had been recruited to increase staff numbers and broaden the skills and experience of the staff team. Children were provided with individual support when required.

Children were settled, happy and having fun.

- b) The deployment of staff was mostly settled and staff only covered in a case of an emergency. This created a stable and supportive staff team who knew the children and their needs very well. Further development

around consistency of practice and understanding of children's individual needs was still required but we acknowledge that the provider had ensured there were sufficient staff to meet the needs of all the children.

This requirement has been met.

Met - within timescales

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

To support children's health, welfare and safety needs, recorded strategies should be monitored and the impact evaluated. This would ensure staff have access to up to date information to support children to reach their full potential.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices'. (HSCS 1.15)

This area for improvement was made on 3 June 2024.

Action taken since then

Children's personal planning was not yet effective in ensuring all children received continuity of care and support. The recording of chronologies were inconsistent across the team and did not always contain strategies of support when required. Although staff had undertaken training on personal plans, we still found that staff's understanding varied across the setting. Staff should understand the purpose of personal plans and are familiar with the guidance 'Guide for Providers on Personal Planning, Early Learning and Childcare' (Care Inspectorate 2021). Further work was needed to ensure additional needs of children were planned, evaluated and monitored for effectiveness. This would ensure all children were supported to reach their full potential.

This area for improvement has not been met and will remain.

Previous area for improvement 2

To support children to achieve their potential the manager and staff should ensure appropriate levels of challenge and depth in learning through child led planning. This should be closely linked to children's individual observations and next steps. Staff should provide children with learning experiences that develop their imagination, independence and offering challenge.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me'. (HSCS 1.19)

This area for improvement was made on 3 June 2024.

Action taken since then

There had been improvements made to the quality of planning for play across the setting. As a result, children were happy and having fun. Staff had worked hard to ensure children's individual observations and next steps were used to plan play experiences. This supported children to reach their potential and progress in their learning.

Although this area for improvement is met we have asked the manager to ensure planning for play is regularly monitored through a robust quality assurance system. Staff should continue to further develop their understanding around delivering high quality play and learning experiences. Especially developing children's independence skills, freedom of choice and supporting their interests to extend their learning.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To further support children's interests, development and learning, the manager and staff should continue to develop the environment and play spaces. Staff should evaluate the spaces to ensure the resources on offer provide opportunities that spark curiosity and reflect children's current interests. This will ensure children engage in more purposeful play and learning.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'As a child I can direct my own play and activities in the way that I choose, and freely access a wide range of experiences and resources suitable for my age and stage, which stimulate my natural curiosity, learning and creativity.' (HSCS 2.2)

This area for improvement was made on 3 June 2024.

Action taken since then

Improvements had been made to the play environment that supported children's interests, development and learning. Staff had worked hard to create an environment that sparked children's interests and was appropriate to their stage of development. Moving forward, staff should continue to build on these opportunities to ensure children are engaged in purposeful play, learning and having fun.

Although this area for improvement is met the manager should continue to monitor the quality of the environment and play spaces through a robust quality assurance system. This would ensure children continue to be involved in purposeful play and learning.

This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 4

To ensure children experience an environment that is respectfully maintained and inviting, the providers should continue with their planned refurbishment of the building. This should include the planned fitting of a door from the playroom, this would ensure the condition stated on the registration certificate is met.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states that: 'I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment' (HSCS 5.22)

This area for improvement was made on 3 June 2024.

Action taken since then

At the previous inspection we asked the provider to ensure the condition on their registration certificate was met, this was around creating direct access from the playroom into the garden. This had not been completed. Moving forward, the provider should continue to progress with this outstanding area for improvement and ensure a plan of action is submitted to the Care Inspectorate in a timely fashion.

This area for improvement has not been met and will remain.

Previous area for improvement 5

To ensure the safety and welfare of the children, policies and procedures should be followed. This should include but not limited too the safer recruitment of staff and safe administration of medication.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited ' (HSCS 4.24).

This area for improvement was made on 3 June 2024.

Action taken since then

Policies and procedures had been updated and were shared with staff. However, in some cases the procedures had not been followed appropriately, especially around recording of medication and chronologies within children's individual plans. Although immediate improvements were made following the letter of serious concern requirement, this area for improvement remains in place. This will support the service's continued focus on enhancing these aspects of practice, ensuring children's safety and sustaining improvements.

All recruitment checks are in place and followed appropriately. We have asked the manager to ensure that they undertake a robust induction process with newly appointed staff and this should include meeting together regularly to discuss progress and staff wellbeing.

This area for improvement has not been met and will remain

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How good is our care, play and learning?	2 - Weak
1.1 Nurturing care and support	2 - Weak
1.3 Play and learning	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	3 - Adequate
2.2 Children experience high quality facilities	3 - Adequate
How good is our leadership?	2 - Weak
3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	2 - Weak
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
4.3 Staff deployment	3 - Adequate

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